

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as indicated below:

1-20 (canceled)

21. (new) A method comprising:

obtaining an image and comparing the image to at least one stored image to identify one or more similar images wherein the at least one stored image is stored within an image database in association with at least one keyword;

producing at least one primary keyword based on the at least one keyword associated with the one or more similar images;

producing at least one finer scale keyword wherein each one of the at least one finer scale keyword is likely to occur in association with at least one of the at least one primary keyword, wherein the likelihood of any keyword occurring in association with another keyword is determined using keyword statistics, and wherein the keyword statistics are maintained within a database statistics module;

presenting the at least one primary keyword and the at least one finer scale keyword to a user, enabling the user to select at least one accepted keyword and wherein any one of the at least one primary keyword or any one of the at least one finer scale keyword can be one of the at least one accepted keyword; and

storing the image within the image database and in association with the at least one accepted keyword and updating the keyword statistics.

22. (new) The method of claim 21 wherein image similarity is based on at least one factor and wherein one of the at least one factor is the closeness in time of image acquisition.

23. (new) The method of claim 21 wherein image similarity is based on at least one factor and wherein one of the at least one factor is determined using a content based image retrieval module.

24. (new) The method of claim 21 wherein there are at least two primary keywords and further comprising:

determining a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two primary keywords wherein a keyword associated with a stored image is more probable if the stored image is more similar to the image; and

wherein the at least two primary keywords are presented to the user in order of descending probability.

25. (new) The method of claim 21 wherein there are at least two finer scale keywords and further comprising:

using the database statistics to determine a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two finer scale keywords wherein the histogram count is an example of a likelihood metric; and

wherein the at least two finer scale keywords are presented to the user in descending order.

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26. (new) The method of claim 21 wherein there are at least two primary keywords, wherein there are at least two finer scale keywords, and further comprising:

determining a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two primary keywords wherein a keyword associated with a stored image is more probable if the stored image is more similar to the image;

using the database statistics to determine a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two finer scale keywords wherein the histogram count is an example of a likelihood metric; and

wherein the at least two primary keywords are presented to the user in order of descending probability and wherein the at least two finer scale keywords are presented to the user in descending order.

27. (new) The method of claim 21 wherein there are at least two primary keywords, wherein there are at least two finer scale keywords, and further comprising:

determining a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two primary keywords wherein a keyword associated with a stored image is more probable if the stored image is more similar to the image;

using the database statistics to determine a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two finer scale keywords wherein the histogram count is an example of a likelihood metric and wherein the probability of each one of the at least two primary keywords effects the likelihood of each one of the at least two finer scale keywords; and

wherein the at least two primary keywords are presented to the user in order of descending probability and wherein the at least two finer scale keywords are presented to the user in descending order.

28. (new) A method comprising:

obtaining an image and comparing the image to at least one stored image to identify one or more similar images wherein the at least one stored image is stored within an image database in association with at least one keyword;

producing at least one primary keyword based on the at least one keyword associated with the one or more similar images;

producing at least one finer scale keyword wherein each one of the at least one finer scale keyword is likely to occur in association with at least one of the at least one primary keyword, wherein the likelihood of any keyword occurring in association with another keyword is determined using keyword statistics, and wherein the keyword statistics are stored within a database statistics module;

presenting the at least one primary keyword and the at least one finer scale keyword to a user;

enabling the user to enter at least one new keyword;

enabling the user to select at least one accepted keyword and wherein any one of the at least one primary keyword, the at least one new keyword, or the at least one finer scale keyword can be one of the at least one accepted keyword;

storing the image within the image database and in association with the at least one accepted keyword.

29. (new) The method of claim 28 wherein image similarity is based on at least one factor and wherein one of the at least one factor is the closeness in time of image acquisition.

30. (new) The method of claim 28 wherein image similarity is based on at least one factor and wherein one of the at least one factor is determined using a content based image retrieval module.

31. (new) The method of claim 28 wherein there are at least two primary keywords and further comprising:

determining a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two primary keywords wherein a keyword associated with a stored image is more probable if the stored image is more similar to the image; and

wherein the at least two primary keywords are presented to the user in order of descending probability.

32. (new) The method of claim 28 wherein there are at least two finer scale keywords and further comprising:

using the database statistics to determine a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two finer scale keywords wherein the histogram count is an example of a likelihood metric; and

wherein the at least two finer scale keywords are presented to the user in descending order.

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33. (new) The method of claim 28 wherein there are at least two primary keywords, wherein there are at least two finer scale keywords, and further comprising:

determining a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two primary keywords wherein a keyword associated with a stored image is more probable if the stored image is more similar to the image;

using the database statistics to determine a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two finer scale keywords wherein the histogram count is an example of a likelihood metric; and

wherein the at least two primary keywords are presented to the user in order of descending probability and wherein the at least two finer scale keywords are presented to the user in descending order.

34. (new) The method of claim 28 wherein there are at least two primary keywords, wherein there are at least two finer scale keywords, and further comprising:

determining a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two primary keywords wherein a keyword associated with a stored image is more probable if the stored image is more similar to the image;

using the database statistics to determine a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two finer scale keywords wherein the histogram count is an example of a likelihood metric and wherein the probability of each one of the at least two primary keywords effects the likelihood of each one of the at least two finer scale keywords; and

wherein the at least two primary keywords are presented to the user in order of descending probability and wherein the at least two finer scale keywords are presented to the user in descending order.

35. (new) The method of claim 28 wherein there are at least two primary keywords, wherein there are at least two finer scale keywords, and further comprising:

determining a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two primary keywords wherein a keyword associated with a stored image is more probable if the stored image is more similar to the image;

using the database statistics to determine a likelihood metric for each one of the at least two finer scale keywords wherein the histogram count is an example of a likelihood metric and wherein the probability of each one of the at least two primary keywords effects the likelihood of each one of the at least two finer scale keywords;

wherein the at least two primary keywords are presented to the user in order of descending probability and wherein the at least two finer scale keywords are presented to the user in descending order; and

wherein image similarity is based on at least two factors and wherein one of the at least two factors is the closeness in time of image acquisition and wherein another one of the at least two factors is determined using a content based image retrieval module.

36. (new) A system comprising:

an image database adapted for storing images in association with keywords wherein each stored image is associated with at least one keyword;

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a content based image retrieval module that can compare a first image with a second image to produce similarity metric;

a database statistics module for providing keyword statistics regarding the likelihood that a second keyword is associated with an image when a first keyword is associated with that image;

a user interface (UI) adapted for providing user intervention during image archiving and further enables user acceptance of system suggestions, user selection of system suggestions, and enables user entry of user-provided keywords for association with images; and

wherein the keyword statistics are updated whenever an image associated with keywords is stored within the image database.